

THE ROLES AND MISSION OF PERSCOM'S ACQUISITION MANAGEMENT BRANCH

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Introduction

The U.S. Total Army Personnel Command's (PERSCOM's) Acquisition Management Branch (AMB) supports the Army Acquisition Corps (AAC) and Acquisition and Technology Workforce (A&TWF) members, and is one organization that is key to the success of your career.

AMB is responsible for developing and sustaining qualified personnel to execute acquisition programs at tactical, operational, and strategic levels, consistent with Army requirements. AMB achieves this through career management of Army acquisition officers and civilian AAC members.

Development Model

AMB supports both the military and civilian workforce via the Acquisition Career Development Plan (ACDP) Development Model. The ACDP Development Model (Figure 1) has three progressive levels that form the basic career path that acquisition workforce members follow in developing functional and leadership competencies. The first level, Functional Expertise, allows an individual to gain expertise in a single acquisition career field (ACF) and to begin to meet AAC membership requirements. The second level, Broadening Experience, allows an individual to build cross-functional and leadership competencies through education, training, and experience. The third level, Strategic Leadership, is typically considered the critical acquisition position (CAP) level and allows an individual to apply acquired leadership and functional competencies in key leadership positions.

Civilian Career Development

The ACDP was developed to help A&TWF members focus on the skills, knowledge, and competencies needed to be competitive. The plan is composed of four processes: Structure/

Position Management, the Development Model, the Career Management Model, and the Competency Model. Civilians are responsible for understanding the requirements for becoming and staying competitive at all levels to achieve success. It is imperative that civilians contact their acquisition career managers (ACMs) to assist with their career development.

Centralized Management

AMB has two groups of career managers that perform the personnel management responsibilities of the branch. Military assignment officers provide centralized management for officers, including career counseling, selection board preparation assistance (military schools and promotions), and slating for command and service school selections (Figure 2). Military assignment officers are organized by grade and career development needs to support the ACDP Development Model (see the *Army Acquisition Career Management Handbook 2001*).

Civilian ACMs located in AMB are responsible for civilian AAC (GS-14 or equivalent personnel demonstration broadband level) members and members of the Competitive Development Group (CDG). In addition, the ACMs provide centralized management for the civilian workforce, including career counseling, selection board preparation assistance, and slating for command and school selections. ACMs also help place AAC members following key developmental and program manager (PM) assignments. ACMs are assigned duties by region: Northeast region, Central region, Southern region, Western region, and the National Capital Region (which includes areas outside CONUS).

Key Relationships

AMB representatives work with the Acquisition Career Management Office (ACMO) and the Army Acquisition Executive Support Agency (AAESA) (Figure 3) on various acquisition career management projects, including the annual Acquisition

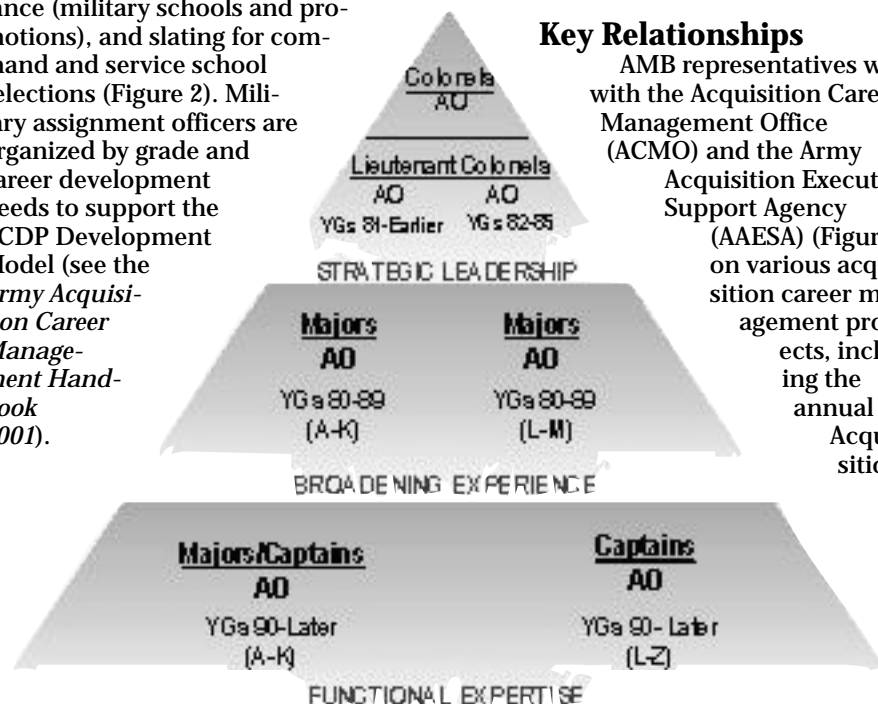


Figure 1.

AMB organization in support of the Acquisition Career Development Plan Development Model

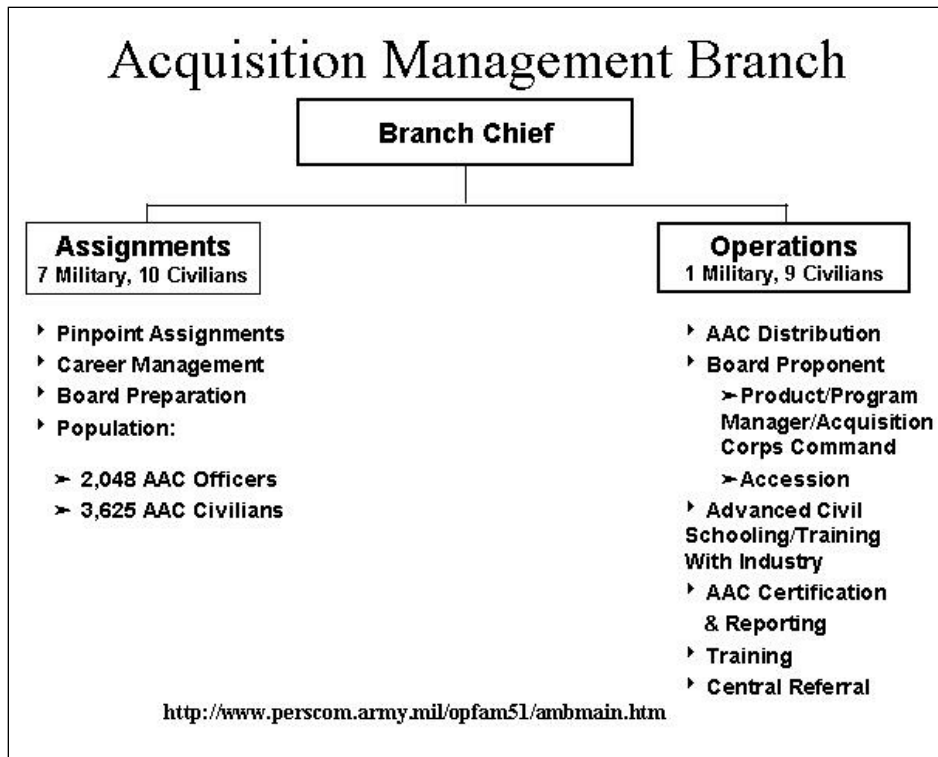


Figure 2.

Career Management Workshop, the CDG Program, and the Acquisition Education, Training and Experience Board. As part of the execution arm of the AAC, AMB balances the various programs established by AAESA and the ACMO to meet current and future Army requirements.

Officer Assignments

Assignments are based on the needs of the Army and an officer's professional development and personal preferences. When planning a move, contact your assignment officer 6-8 months prior to your scheduled rotation date for tentative assignments and options. Then, contact the assignment officer again at 5 months for assignment lock-in.

Generally, captain positions are considered developmental. Captains and recently promoted majors new to the AAC will first serve in a developmental position. After completing a developmental assignment, they will complete the Military Education Level 4 (MEL 4) requirement (Command and General Staff College). When MEL 4 is achieved, the officers will be assigned to positions that normally require Level II certification, such as assistant PM or program integrator. These assignments are typically followed by a Department of the Army (DA) staff position, an

entry-level position in another career field, or another developmental job in an officer's primary career field. Remember, because of the short timeline and variety of experience an acquisition officer must have to be competitive for selection by the PM/Acquisition Command Board, the average time on station for AAC captains and majors is 25 months. However, the average time on station for lieutenant colonels is 34 months because they serve in CAPs that are mandated by law at 36 months (unless a waiver is obtained).

All GS-14 or equivalent personnel demonstration broadband level and lieutenant colonel and above positions are CAPs and require AAC membership.

Civilian AAC Membership

There are four ways to become a member of the AAC:

- Meet all the qualifications for AAC membership and be selected for a CAP (GS-14 or equivalent personnel demonstration broadband level).
- Complete the CDG Program. (CDGs do not have to be selected to a CAP to be accessed into the AAC.)
- Be certified through another process such as the U.S. Army Reserve; i.e., military certifications transfer when seeking civilian positions.

- Transfer certification to the Army from another DOD component.

Staying Competitive

Because most captains in the zone of consideration for major are still in their first acquisition assignment, they are promoted to major based on what they have accomplished in their basic branch rather than what they have done in the AAC. Therefore, what gets a captain promoted in the AAC is no different from the rest of the Army: a strong file with successful company command. Under the Officer Personnel Management System for the 21st Century (OPMS XXI), beginning at the grade of lieutenant colonel, all year groups (YGs) will compete for promotion and schooling within their career field. All AAC officers are operational support career field upon accession into the AAC.

Experience has demonstrated that officers who are most competitive for PM or acquisition command have served in a variety of positions as a major. For example, AAC officers with a primary area of concentration (AOC) of 51A should serve in a PM office. However, to broaden their experience base, they should also serve in combat development positions at the Army Training and Doctrine Command or testing positions at the Army Test and Evaluation Command. Similar broad-based experience is necessary for officers assigned in AOC 51R or AOC 51C. DA Pamphlet 600-3, Chapter 47 states: "During the developmental years, officers should work toward Corps certification and level qualification in at least two AOCs."

IDPs

The individual development plan (IDP) is a 5-year plan that is critical for identifying and tracking an acquisition professional's career objectives in the areas of experience, education, and training. All military and civilian members of the A&TWF are required to complete an IDP regardless of grade, broadband equivalent, or military rank. The IDP must be updated annually during performance evaluation reviews.

Certification

Certification is important to both military and civilian members of the A&TWF because the Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act requires that standards be associated

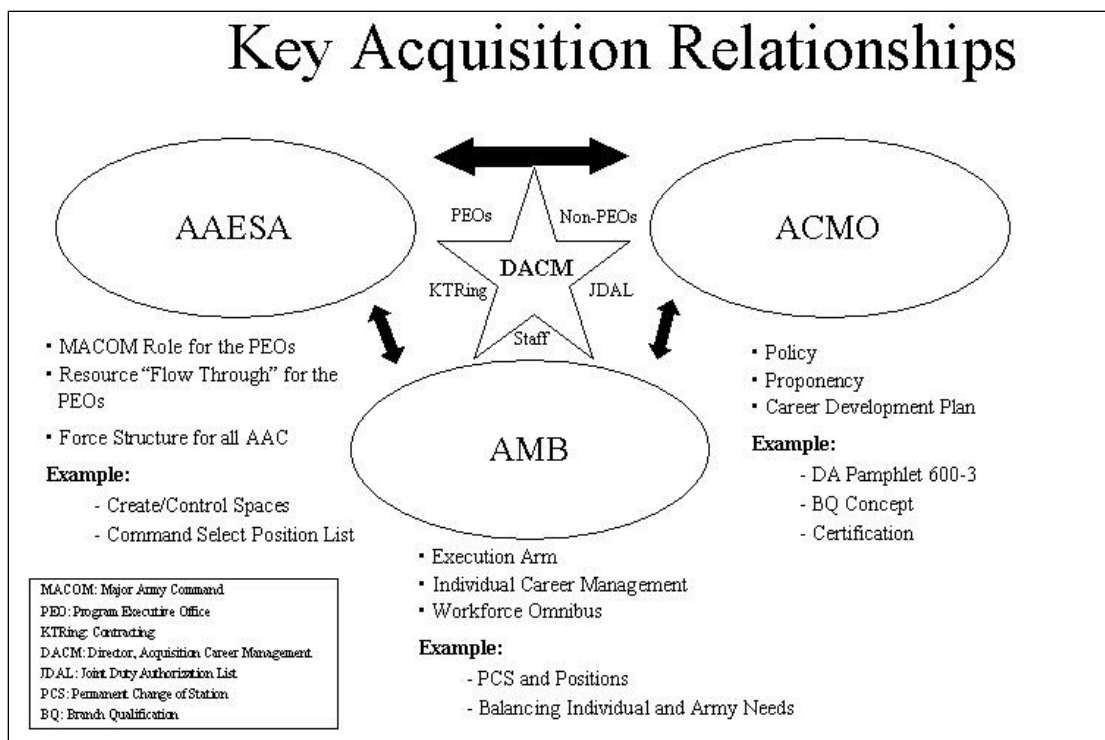


Figure 3.

with all acquisition positions. Generally, each career field requires 12 months of experience for Level I, 24 months for Level II, and 48 months for Level III certification. Requirements and procedures for certification are located online at <http://www.dacm.rdaisa.army.mil> (Click on **Policy/Procedures, Certification**, then **Certification Procedures**.)

Additional Information

Your Official Military Personnel File, which includes officer evaluation reports, school transcripts, and commendatory and disciplinary data, is maintained by AMB, not your basic branch. Bear in mind though, that AAC officers should continue to wear their basic branch insignia on all military uniforms. This is especially important when having your photo taken, which should be done every 3 years. Also, list your basic branch, not AAC, in the administrative data on your photo.

Keep your fiche, officer record brief (ORB), acquisition career record brief, and personnel file current. If you receive an award and the award certificate is not on your fiche, send AMB the certificate and inform us which number award it is. This will ensure a match with your ORB (the award recommendation, DA Form 638-1, is not required). In addition, ensure that the orders number is printed on the left-

hand corner of your certificate. Verify your fiche to ensure that it reflects what is on your ORB.

Keep your career manager or assignment officer informed of your current home address, e-mail address, and work and home phone numbers. Occasionally, they are unable to contact individuals when the need arises. If a great opportunity becomes available and we are unable to reach you, we must go to the next individual on our list. The bottom line: we need current contact information! This is especially important when you PCS to a new assignment or location.

Finally, please don't hesitate to visit AMB. However, we do suggest that you call ahead to schedule an appointment with your career manager or assignment officer. Directions to AMB are on the PERSCOM Web site at <http://www.perscom.army.mil>. We are located in Room 7S33 in Hoffman Building II.

Conclusion

PERSCOM's AMB stands ready to support AAC and A&TWF members as the execution arm of Acquisition Corps directives and policies. Many programs are available to assist you in planning your career, to include position assignments and education. We encourage you to contact your appropriate career manager so that we may work together

for suitable solutions to your career expectations.

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